



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

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Meeting Date: February 4, 2022

Agenda Item: 2022–2023 Biennial Quota Ranges

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 Minutes

Background: The department is seeking commission approval for the 2022–2023 quota ranges for limited entry licenses and permits for antelope, bighorn sheep, deer (both white-tailed and mule deer), elk, moose, and mountain goat. These quota ranges are adopted by the commission biennially during the regular season-setting cycle. The authorized quota ranges allow biologists and managers to make quota adjustments outside the biennial season-setting schedule that are within the adopted range. Any changes outside adopted ranges require commission approval. This greatly expedites and simplifies annual quota adjustments. These quotas represent authority and limits to the number of licenses and permits that may be offered by the department. Biologists often make final within-range quota adjustments after scheduled commission meetings following surveys, but before licenses and permits are drawn. For example, biologists do not complete antelope surveys until mid to late July and data sometimes warrant adjustments to license numbers, but changes need to be made before licenses are drawn in early August.

A table of the licenses and permits for which there are quota ranges is attached to this cover sheet.

Public Involvement Process and Results: Public comment was accepted through Jan. 21, 2022. Based on the substance of public comment received through Jan. 14, the department is recommending no changes to the license and quota ranges presented in December, although adjustments and corrections from previous year's license and quota ranges for the various species are noted in the master lists. Substantive changes are primarily noted for elk. Any final adjustments to these recommendations based on final public comment will be made at the commission meeting on Feb. 4.

Alternatives and Analysis: The commission may provide the department with additional amendments on any license-permit type for any species. The proposals being presented to the commission include changes incorporated in response to feedback received through Jan. 14.

Agency Recommendation and Rationale: The department recommends the commission approve the proposed 2022 and 2023 biennial quota ranges as presented by the department and as outlined in the attached master list. Any aspect unchanged from 2021 seasons will remain in effect for 2022 and 2023.

Proposed Motion: I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission vote to approve quotas and quota ranges identified in the proposed 2022 and 2023 biennial quota range master list as presented by the department, unless addressed by any other proposal currently before the commission.